

Why do people share their travel experiences on social media?

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by

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RESUMO

O turismo está, cada vez mais, a ser afectado pelas redes sociais e as recomendações de amigos são, sem dúvida, importantes influências na tomada de decisão sobre viagens. Assim, torna-se bastante interessante explorar o papel das redes sociais num contexto de viagem. É também crucial perceber por que é que existem pessoas que não partilham as suas experiências de viagem, geralmente conhecidas como *lurkers*. Por outro lado, a teoria da influência social e suas três dimensões - identificação, internalização e conformidade - , desempenharam um papel crítico neste estudo, bem como a personalidade dos utilizadores. Com base em 381 respostas, os resultados revelaram duas razões dominantes: em primeiro lugar, o prazer apercebido foi o motivo mais importante para explicar por que os viajantes partilham suas experiências de viagem nas redes sociais e sites de viagens online. Em segundo lugar, questões de segurança e privacidade estão no topo das razões inibidoras à partilha. Este estudo amplia a literatura existente ao combinar todos os comportamentos online num único modelo fornecendo uma perspectiva holística neste contexto. Sugeriram-se ainda sugestões para futuros estudos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Partilha de experiências de viagem; redes sociais; turismo; teoria da influência social.

ABSTRACT

Tourism practices are being increasingly affected by social media and recommendations from trusted friends are undoubtedly major influencers in travel decision making. Thus, it is quite interesting to explore the role of social media in a travelling context. It is also crucial to understand why there are people who do not share their experiences, usually known as lurkers. Allied to this, social influence theory and its three constructs – identification, internalization and compliance, have played a critical role in this study, as well as the users' personality. Based on 381 responses, findings revealed two dominant reasons: first, perceived enjoyment was the most important motive to explain why travellers share their travel experiences on online networks and travel websites. Second, security and privacy issues are at the top of lurking reasons. This study extends the existing literature by combining all online behaviours into one single model. Suggestions for further researches were given.

KEYWORDS

Sharing travel experiences; social media; tourism; social influence theory.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

UGC	User Generated Content
PLS	Partial Least Squares
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
IDENT	Identification
INTER	Internalization
COMP	Compliance
PJOY	Perceived Enjoyment
AM	Altruistic Motivations
PF	Personal fulfilment and self-actualization
ER	Environmental reasons
PR	Personal reasons
RR	Relationship reasons
SR	Security and privacy reasons
AS	Actual travel-experience sharing

1. INTRODUCTION

Travellers look for suggestions, recommendations and insights from online social networks (Bilgian, Barreda, Okumus, & Nusair, 2016) when they are planning their trips. TripAdvisor offers information from millions of travellers, with 500 million reviews and recommendations and 390 million of unique visitors (Smith, 2017) leading to an enormous amount of User-Generated Content (UGC). Thus, social media is becoming increasingly important for the tourism industry. The development of the Internet has reshaped not only the way people plan their trips, but also the way they share their travel experience with their family and friends. The CEO of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, affirmed that “People influence people. Nothing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend” (Zuckerberg, 2017). It seems highly interesting to understand why people are so influenced by the judgments of others (Wood & Hayes, 2012), when deciding whether to travel to a specific destination.

Previous research shows that social networks usually provide richer information than the one found in other types of platforms such as official sites or media sharing sites (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Travellers elect social media platforms as the predominant tool for sharing their travel experiences (S. Wang, Kirillova, & Lehto, 2017). One example is the popular website TripAdvisor where almost 200 million travelers search for information and references on destinations, restaurants, hotels, etc., influencing their travel plans (Filieri, Alguezaui, & McLeay, 2015). Sharing travel information, stories and experiences uploading text contents, images, audios and videos (Kang & Schuett, 2013) is becoming a crucial channel in tourism. In Portugal, Facebook dominates the list of social media networks, being used by 89.56% of the Portuguese population (Statcounter Global Stats, 2017).

The impact of social media on the tourism industry can be seen through two dimensions: before travel and after travel. Before the trip, people search for travel information and recommendations mainly to plan, organize and get ideas. However, besides looking for information, do travellers also share this information, in order to tell the world their experiences? After the trip, travellers may or may not want to share their experiences on social media platforms. The present study seeks to analyse this issue more in depth.

The brain and the human mind are, as yet, a mystery that science has not solved (Penfield, 2015). Due to the constant growth and the assiduous presence of social media in our lives, the human behaviours that lead to online participation have been the subject of several studies. However, previous studies are still largely unexplored as a result of the huge number of behaviours that the human brain can trigger. The purpose of this study is to understand the drivers that lead people to participate online to tell their travel experiences to others and on the other hand, understand the factors that lead them not to share. People are “strongly and unconsciously influenced by others” (Franks, 2010, p.4) in many ways and this research will prove that social psychology will be the predominant base to understand the travellers’ behaviour online. The limitations of prior studies are mainly related to the no-differentiation among social media participants (observers, contributors, or both) and their different behaviours in social media use. Moreover, there have been few studies that have conducted a holistic interpretation of the direct effects and the indirect effects of the determinants on online participation. Inspired by these reasons, this paper firstly contributes to demonstrating that depending on which role the user plays (poster or lurker) there are different behaviours in use of social media along with the influence of users’ personality. Secondly, it provides

a more holistic evaluation of the drivers of sharing their travel experiences on social media in comparison with previous researches.

This research is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the existing theoretical background. Section 3 proposes the conceptual model and corresponding hypotheses. Section 4 describes the research methodology used to test the model. Section 5 presents the data analysis and results, followed by section 6 which discusses practical and theoretical implications, limitations and future research suggestions. Lastly, Section 7 presents the key conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Technology developments have clearly impacted our society, in particular the consumer. The consumer of today is more informed, demanding, challenging and curious. Due to the exponential increase of information offered online, travellers' tendency to search for recommendations online is being a constant and growing reality (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

A "mega trend" has arose on the Internet - the so-called social media. Social media are Internet-based applications on the Web 2.0 which allow users to interact on mutual interests (Nezakati et al., 2015). User-Generated Content (UGC) can be described as the information created and shared by the users of social media, in which the content could take many forms such as reviews, recommendations, photos and videos, question-and-answer forums and blogs (Durio, 2017). Through social media websites, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TripAdvisor, etc, people are more engaged and socially integrated in an online environment. In the tourism industry, with the number of travel information growing in a rampant way (Nezakati, et al., 2015), the sharing of knowledge, experiences and interests worldwide has proved to be an important source for the travel planning process. Moreover, the success of social media is, more and more, being perceived as a powerful marketing tool in the tourism context (Güçer, Bağ, & Altınay, 2017).

As Joo Bae, et.al (2017) have investigated with Airbnb users, the behaviours differ pretrip and posttrip. Before the trip, travellers search information and recommendations on hotels, restaurants, activities, attractions, events and nightlife, making the decision much more accurate based on the reviews available on social media networks such as Facebook and TripAdvisor. According to EyeforTravel, 88% of travelers search for this type of information before they book the trip (Afonso, 2016). Moreover, as stated in a study conducted by Nielsen, Nielsen Global Trust in Advertising Survey, approximately eight-in-ten of the respondents (83%) say they fully trust the recommendations of friends and family more than information gathered on tourism agencies and two-thirds (66%) trust consumer opinions posted online (Nielsen, 2015). After the trip, travellers may want to, or not, share their experiences and interact with other travellers through social media platforms.

2.1 FACILITATORS TO SHARE CONTENT ONLINE

According to a study conducted by Munar & Jacobsen (2014), altruistic and community-related motivations are the most relevant for information sharing. In other words, people are highly motivated to share their experiences online to help others travellers with useful advices and preventing people from using bad products and services, to contribute to websites that are valuable for them, or to maintain social contacts and friendship. Moreover, social influence seems to be highly relevant and applicable in this context. Kang & Schuett (2013) stated that changes in behaviours shaped by social influence take place at three processes of commitments: identification, internalization and compliance (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Malhotra & Dennis (2005), have also studied about the volatility of behaviours based in these three processes of attitude change: thought identification process, people feel to belong to a social group and they feel they will fit in with the group when they share their knowledge through social media (Kang & Schuett, 2013); internalization

occurs when an individual assumes the opinion of others as evidence of the truth and as part of his own values and beliefs (Malhotra & Dennis, 2005). They are influenced to accept information and use social media due to the inherent values, values that people identify themselves with (Kang & Schuett, 2013); finally, compliance occurs when behaviour is adopted in order to achieve rewards or avoid punishments (Malhotra & Dennis, 2005). Based on the theory of belonging and the intrinsic motivation of altruism developed by Ma & Chan (2014), perceived online attachment motivation (creation of strong relationships and cohesive groups is an innate characteristic of humans) and perceived online relationship commitment (improving the social interaction with others – the need to belong) have positive effects on online knowledge sharing (Ma & Chan, 2014). Yoo & Gretzel (2008) also suggested seven factors that influence online travellers to write reviews: 1) enjoyment; 2) exertion of collective power over companies; 3) venting negative feelings; 4) concerns for other consumers; 5) helping the company, 6) expressing positive feelings; and 7) self-enhancement (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Lai & Chen (2014) have found that intrinsic motivation have influence on posters (i.e., enjoyment and knowledge self-efficacy), while extrinsic motivation influences lurkers (i.e., reciprocity) (Lan & Chen, 2014). Moreover, Correa, et al. (2015) have explored the dimensions of the Big-Five model and social media use and how they were related between them; their results revealed that people who are more extraverted and open to experiences tend to use more social media (Correa, Hinsley, & Zúñiga, 2015). Vannucci et. al (2017) examined the association between social media use and anxiety in emerging adults, whose findings suggested a positive correlation among both - the higher is the daily social media use, and the greater is the likelihood of being anxious. It means that an anxious person could engage with social media in an excessive and eccentric way, in order to validate its self-esteem (e.g. constantly sharing of information to obtain the maximum of comments and "likes").

2.2 INHIBITORS TO SHARE CONTENT ONLINE

Despite the fact that the creation of consumer-generated content is increasing every day, the number of those who remain silent is even higher (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Thus, it is increasingly pertinent to understand “the silent majority” (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014) in the sense that it is also crucial to know why people do not share their own experiences on social media – the lurkers. Prior studies have defined lurkers in different ways such as the “silent groups” (Sun, Rau, & Ma, 2014) as someone who has never shared any type of information in social networks (Preece, Nonnecke, & Andrews, 2004), a person who reads but never posts (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014), or a conservative and strategic attitude towards Internet to preserve personal information (Osatuyi, 2015). In this paper, a lurker is a person who does not share any type of content, while still connected with social media platforms. Research made by Preece, Nonnecke, & Andrews (2004) revealed five main reasons for lurking which were basically related with issues of low self-esteem (e.g. shyness on sharing information on social media or the feeling of not fitting into any group) or issues related with not being technology user-friendly (e.g. sporadic and uncomfortable use of technologies). The 1% rule proposed by Arthur (2006) states that in a group of 100 people online, one will produce content, 10 will engage with an interaction (e.g. by adding a comment) and the remaining 89 will passively observe it. It has been largely demonstrated that the majority of the online information is generated by very few users (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014).

2.3 PERSONALITY INFLUENCE ON SHARING CONTENT ONLINE

Gawel (1997) suggested the theory of human motivation in which people are driven to achieve certain needs displayed in a hierarchy. People become motivated to accomplish their needs while moving up the hierarchy only when their lowest needs are satisfied. Once the basic needs - physiological and safety needs - have been met, the next level up to be fulfilled are the social needs (e.g. love and belonging), moving to self-esteem needs (e.g. to feel respected and our status within society) and, at last, reaching the top of the hierarchy where the needs of self-actualization needs are met - realizing individual potential, self-fulfillment, looking for personal growth (Maslow, 1943). One innate characteristic of humans is to identify their role in the society which is inherently related with the desire for self-realization (Maslow, 1943). Social media represents a way through which people can convey what they want people to think of them, thereby achieving their personal fulfillment.

The driving factors that distinguish poster and lurker groups are widely related with the influence of personality that traits each group (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014). A study conducted by The New York Times, on the psychology of sharing, has identified six sharing personality types, or “personas”: altruists (people who want to help others and less driven by self-interest); careerists (motivated to create discussion and debate); hipsters (those who want to have an online identity and stay connected with the world); boomerangs (those strongly motivated by the reaction they get back from sharing and by the generation of a lot of comments and likes); connectors (people who are concerned about mutual experiences and staying connected); and lastly the selectives (people who share information only with a certain person expecting particular reactions) (Brett, 2011).

On the other hand, lurkers’ personality is rather different. Existing literature states that people are influenced by what others think, especially those with low self-esteem, with lack of confidence in themselves and those who are too shy to post (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014).

In contrast, a study conducted by Correa et al. (2015), who have investigated how the personal characteristics of Web users may influence them to participate actively in social media, revealed that introverted and lonely people tended to use the Web to alleviate their real-world isolation (Correa, Hinsley, & Zúñiga, 2015). Other studies stated that one of the most popular reasons for not sharing online is to remain anonymous due to privacy concerns (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011) which characterizes this group by their discretion.

Based on the review of existing theoretical background, the constructs of the present research model have emerged. In conclusion, among all personal characteristics presented in the literary review, three constructs stand out – internalization, identification, and compliance – which have arose from the social influence theory. Regarding the facilitators, it is concluded that the most important to explain online travel share are the altruistic motivations, personal-fulfilment and self-actualization, and perceived enjoyment. Lastly, the most relevant inhibitors applied to this study are the reasons related with environment, relationships, personal, and security and privacy. Table 1 briefly provides a summary of the determinants identified in previous studies within this context, relating them with the emergent constructs. From Table 1, we can conclude that no study, so far, has developed a holistic assessment of the factors that explain the actual travel experience sharing (AS), which is, in the end, the main contribution of our paper.

Reference	Context	Social influence theory			Facilitators			Inhibitors			
		Internalization	Identification	Compliance	Altruistic motivations	Personal fulfilment and Self-actualization	Perceived enjoyment	Environmental reasons	Relationship reasons	Personal reasons	Security and privacy reasons
Munar & Jacobsen (2014)	This study investigates the motivations of travellers to contribute with relevant information to other travellers through social networks, specifically regarding the destination of Mallorca				X	X					
Kang & Schuett (2013)	Social influence is the base of this research which tries to identify the reasons for travel information online sharing	X	X	X			X				
Preece et al., (2004)	The research targets in this study are the lurkers and their motivations for not posting.							X	X	X	X
Sun et al. (2014)	A deep investigation on lurkers was carried out to understand their reasons, what defines them and recommendations for lurkers share content online were suggested.							X	X	X	X
K. H. Yoo & Gretzel (2008)	This study focuses on the drivers that lead people to write reviews in travel website, based on an online questionnaire.				X		X				
K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel (2011)	The influence of users' personality regarding the online generated content is the key of this investigation. Findings demonstrated a high correlation between personality and sharing content through social media networks									X	X
Lai & Chen (2014)	A model was developed based on the two dimensions of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic motivations in order to explore the reasons to post or not post online contents.				X		X		X		
Zhou (2014)	This study explores the factors of online contribution from a social influence perspective.	X	X	X							
Correa et al. (2015)	The Big-Five model (extraversion, emotional stability and openness to experience) was explored from a social media use perspective	X	X	X							

Table 1. Facilitators and Inhibitors and personal characteristics on sharing content online

3. MODEL RESEARCH AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

We propose an integrative research model from three major groups (Figure 1). Firstly, social influence theory has been playing a key role on people's personality, which gathers three types of personal characteristics - identification, internalization, and compliance. Those indicators have a direct effect on perceived enjoyment, and an indirect effect on actual travel experience sharing (AS). By integrating these constructs, it allows us to evaluate the impact of the social influence theory on perceived enjoyment. Perceived enjoyment explains actual travel experience sharing (AS). The second major group is related with the facilitators of online sharing, where highlights two main contributing factors: altruistic motivations, and personal-fulfilment and self-actualization reasons. Finally, from the third group, the inhibitors, four constructs emerge: environmental reasons, relationship reasons, personal reasons, and security and privacy reasons.

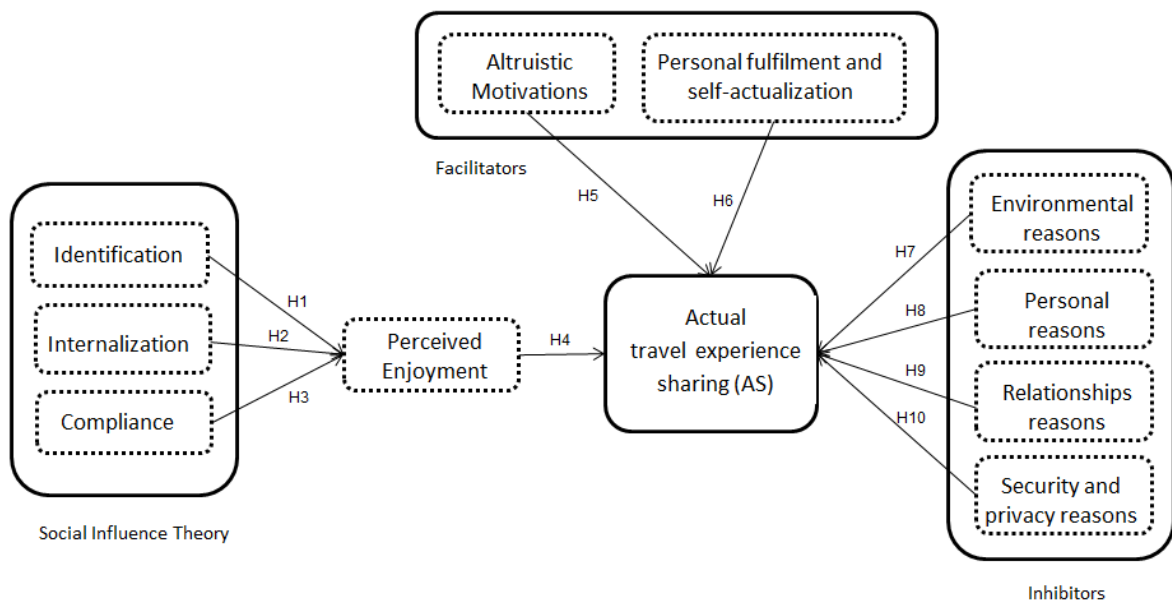


Figure 1 – The research model

3.1 SOCIAL INFLUENCE THEORY

Social influence theory is defined as the degree to which a person expects a particular behaviour from the people who are important to him or her (Kang & Schuett, 2013). This theory suggests that changes in behaviours shaped by social influence arise from three levels of psychological attachment: identification, internalization, and compliance which result from distinct commitments on satisfying personal goals (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Briefly, identification has been understood as the adoption of a certain behaviour to maintain a relationship with a person or group; internalization is defined as the acceptance of induced behaviour by assuming the opinion of others as evidence of the certainty; and compliance stands for the acceptance of influenced behaviours because they are expecting for approval, favourable feedback and avoiding dissatisfactions and censures. These three constructs have an influence on perceived enjoyment which could be defined as a pleasant reaction to media use (Tamborini, Bowman, Eden, Grizzard, & Organ, 2010). The constructs from Kang & Schuett (2013)

- identification, internalization, and compliance - aim to explain how personality influences the sharing of content online and to predict certain users' behaviors in certain situations. It is expected that identification and internalization have a positive influence on perceived enjoyment and consequently on actual travel experience sharing because the sense of belonging or fitting into a group have a general positive outlook on life as well as the congruence with one's own personal customs and values (Kang & Schuett, 2013). On the contrary, in the case of compliance it is likely to have a negative influence on perceived enjoyment and consequently on actual travel sharing because users are under situations of surveillance and manipulation which has a pejorative effect on users and creating a non-enjoyable behaviour such as sharing information on social media (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

- H1. Identification will have a positive influence on perceived enjoyment in travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).
- H2. Internalization will have a positive influence on perceived enjoyment in travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).
- H3. Compliance will have a negative influence on perceived enjoyment in travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).
- H4. Perceived enjoyment positively influence actual travel-experience sharing on social media (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

3.2 FACILITATORS TO SHARING CONTENT ONLINE

The determinants which may facilitate travellers to share their experiences in social media were gathered in two major groups: altruistic motivations and personal-fulfilment and self-actualization. Altruistic motivations are related with people who want to support and help others to make right decisions, prevent them from choosing bad services and products or to contribute to websites that are considered to be helpful and valuable (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014); and personal fulfilment and self-actualization expresses the way through which people can convey what they want people to think of them, thereby achieving their personal fulfillment, e.g. people who want to be more recognized for their travel experiences or, on the other hand, to fulfill their social needs, travellers seek to consume information and interact with other travellers (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Both facilitators are expected to positively influence actual experience sharing in a way that people have a genuine willingness to share that brings them satisfaction (Lai & Chen, 2014), influenced by intrinsic motivations (Pan & Ph, 2007). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

- H5. Altruistic motivations will have a positive influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.
- H6. Personal fulfilment and self-actualization will have a positive influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

3.3 INHIBITORS TO SHARE CONTENT ONLINE

Sun et al. (2014) examined why lurkers lurk and they suggested four reasons for this behaviour. The third group includes those inhibitors: environmental reasons which are related with the poor characteristics of the websites that severely impact the intention to contribute to social media (e.g. poor quality of messages, bad design, a small number of responses and long response delay), factor

reinforced by Nonnecke, et.al (2004); personal reasons are associated with personal characteristics that restrain users from participating, such as introversion, lack of self-esteem and shyness, reasons also supported by Preece et al. (2004); relationship reasons represents the low intimacy with other members and the fear of making a commitment to the social group leading to the non-collaboration, mentioned as well on Preece et al. (2004) and Rau, et.al (2008) research; and security and privacy reasons, when users' requirements of security and privacy are not satisfied by social media platforms because people were afraid that sharing content using social media will dangerously reveal their private information, motive pointed out also by K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel (2011). All the determinants mentioned so far represent impediments and fear of online participation leading to a pejorative effect on actual travel experience. Hence, it is postulated that:

- H7. Environmental reasons will have a negative influence on actual travel-experience sharing on social media.
- H8. Personal reasons will have a negative influence on actual travel-experience sharing on social media.
- H9. Relationship reasons will have a negative influence on actual travel-experience sharing on social media.
- H10. Security and privacy reasons will have a negative influence on actual travel-experience sharing on social media.

4. METHODOLOGY

The data was gathered using an online survey from Google forms. Initially, to test the tool, a pilot test was carried out from the 22nd to the 24th of May of 2017 to a group of 30 users of social media platforms. This initial study aimed to improve the questions and delete unclear and ambiguous items in order to refine the content and structure of the survey. Preliminary evidence presented reliable and valid scales. Following the pre-test, the questionnaire was sent through social media platforms, in order to reach the target, the users of social media platforms.

The questionnaire items were based on existing literature and adapted for this context. All items for each question were measured with a seven-point range scale, assessing from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7) (see Appendix). Since the universe of interest is the users of social media, the first question of the questionnaire was to filter people who use any social media platform (e.g. Facebook) and who don’t use social media. Consequently, all the non-users were discarded. A total of 381 valid responses were obtained. In order to assess the common method bias it was addressed the Harman’s single-factor test proposed by Podsakoff, et.al (2003). The first factor explains 31.2% of the covariance amongst all constructs, less than 50%, which means that it does not affect our data (Podsakoff et al., 2003) (Podsakoff et al.,2012).

As shown in Table 1, more women (65.9%) than men (34.1%) participated in the survey. This coincides with the findings of Kimbrough, et.al (2013) who have studied about gender differences in mediated communication: women are more engaged with social media comparing with men (Kimbrough et al., 2013). Respondents were mostly between 21 and 40 years old (71.4%) with a large percentage (86.3%) having received a college or master degree. More than half of the sample (54.9%) is employed.

Characteristics	Frequency (n=381)	Respondents (%)	Characteristics	Frequency (n=381)	Respondents (%)
Gender			Education		
Female	251	65.9%	4th Grade	1	0.30%
Male	130	34.1%	High school	41	10.80%
Age			University College	208	54.50%
16-20	20	5.20%	Master Degree	121	31.80%
21-25	137	36.00%	PhD Degree	10	2.60%
26-30	63	16.50%			
31-35	34	8.90%	Profession		
36-40	38	10.00%	Student	85	22.30%
41-45	13	3.40%	Working-Student	31	8.10%
46-50	27	7.10%	Employees	209	54.90%
51-55	27	7.10%	Self-employed	37	9.70%
56-60	14	3.70%	Unemployed	10	2.60%
61 or older	8	2.10%	Retired	9	2.40%

Table 2. Profile of the respondents

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) has been used for estimating and testing linkage between constructs, namely the Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modelling. The PLS technique was considered to be the most appropriate method to follow in this study due to three main reasons: the first has to do with PLS' approach whose purpose is prediction, suitable for this type of models; the second is due to the fact that the PLS technique does not require a large sample neither a normal distribution; and the third is related to the fact that PLS is indicated for the analysis of a complex model that includes a formative indicator (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). All constructs were measured using reflective items except for the construct Actual travel experience Sharing (AS) which is a formative indicator. Consequently, there were two different analyses in the measurement model section, one for the reflective constructs and another for the formative constructs.

5.1. MEASUREMENT MODELS

Firstly, in regard to the reflective constructs, we need to evaluate: internal consistency, convergent validity (indicator reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)), and discriminant validity (Hair Jr, Hult, M.Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). To assess the internal consistency, the criterion of composite reliability has been assessed. The values have shown results higher than 0.7 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). To evaluate convergent validity, the indicator reliability and the AVE were analysed. The indicator reliability criterion reveals that the loadings of each indicator should be higher than 0.7. According with this criterion, the following items were removed due to low loadings: ER1, ER4, PR2, and RR1. All the other items reveal satisfactory values higher than 0.7, except for ER2 that shows a loading of 0.663, which is acceptable (see Table 3). It was suggested by Fornell & Larcker (1981), that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should present a value equal or higher than 0.5 which indicates adequate convergent validity (Götz, Liehr-Gobbers, & Krafft, 2010). Consequently, and according to the results shown in bold on the diagonal in Table 4, all constructs indicate AVE greater than 0.5.

Items	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR
Ident1	0.885	0.637	0.303	0.632	0.373	0.654	-0.148	-0.277	-0.338	-0.271
Ident2	0.933	0.614	0.366	0.506	0.324	0.572	-0.091	-0.188	-0.258	-0.157
Ident3	0.897	0.579	0.383	0.448	0.310	0.577	-0.031	-0.100	-0.202	-0.117
Inter1	0.585	0.878	0.329	0.498	0.279	0.503	-0.054	-0.193	-0.249	-0.186
Inter2	0.553	0.821	0.294	0.564	0.328	0.585	-0.140	-0.204	-0.246	-0.200
Inter3	0.609	0.877	0.313	0.586	0.356	0.513	-0.177	-0.275	-0.321	-0.266
Comp1	0.201	0.207	0.624	0.036	0.173	0.202	0.157	0.055	0.093	0.037
Comp2	0.299	0.233	0.683	0.073	0.116	0.276	0.201	0.150	0.056	0.083

Comp3	0.358	0.354	0.952	0.214	0.282	0.345	0.091	0.059	-0.058	-0.024
Pjoy1	0.583	0.605	0.183	0.956	0.412	0.561	-0.331	-0.410	-0.473	-0.386
Pjoy2	0.580	0.651	0.214	0.961	0.425	0.557	-0.332	-0.446	-0.523	-0.414
Pjoy3	0.553	0.593	0.147	0.958	0.435	0.524	-0.336	-0.451	-0.481	-0.406
AM1	0.386	0.384	0.260	0.483	0.918	0.340	-0.183	-0.224	-0.255	-0.133
AM2	0.319	0.303	0.244	0.356	0.927	0.269	-0.143	-0.137	-0.231	-0.084
AM3	0.316	0.337	0.236	0.359	0.890	0.238	-0.128	-0.134	-0.235	-0.112
PF1	0.629	0.594	0.341	0.545	0.330	0.941	-0.080	-0.178	-0.281	-0.245
PF2	0.640	0.594	0.377	0.564	0.303	0.940	-0.111	-0.208	-0.322	-0.270
PF3	0.611	0.556	0.309	0.489	0.240	0.921	-0.099	-0.148	-0.251	-0.225
ER2	-0.011	-0.034	0.116	-0.143	-0.017	-0.051	0.663	0.259	0.239	0.189
ER3	-0.121	-0.162	0.135	-0.364	-0.190	-0.106	0.979	0.439	0.437	0.306
PR1	-0.073	-0.202	0.132	-0.326	-0.098	-0.130	0.411	0.814	0.522	0.487
PR3	0.033	-0.036	0.218	-0.171	-0.064	0.002	0.328	0.677	0.429	0.336
PR4	-0.336	-0.294	-0.021	-0.480	-0.219	-0.236	0.333	0.867	0.636	0.568
RR2	-0.355	-0.342	-0.067	-0.537	-0.287	-0.322	0.421	0.651	0.936	0.585
RR3	-0.165	-0.217	0.055	-0.368	-0.175	-0.215	0.356	0.589	0.871	0.475
SPR1	-0.190	-0.249	0.052	-0.412	-0.109	-0.246	0.310	0.595	0.594	0.931
SPR2	-0.144	-0.176	0.018	-0.325	-0.116	-0.173	0.255	0.519	0.491	0.906
SPR3	-0.238	-0.267	-0.043	-0.408	-0.111	-0.295	0.280	0.565	0.540	0.923

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Comp (Compliance); Pjoy (Perceived Enjoyment); AM (Altruistic Motivations); PF (Personal fulfilment and self-actualization); ER (Environmental reasons); PR (Personal reasons); RR (Relationship reasons); SPR (Security and privacy reasons).

Table 3 – Cross-Loadings

Cons-structs	Mean	SD	CR	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR	AS
Ident	2.628	1.432	0.931	0.905										
Inter	2.957	1.409	0.894	0.679	0.859									
Comp	2.392	1.340	0.805	0.383	0.363	0.767								
Pjoy	3.952	1.838	0.971	0.597	0.643	0.190	0.958							
AM	3.621	1.665	0.937	0.376	0.377	0.271	0.443	0.912						
PF	2.399	1.611	0.954	0.671	0.623	0.367	0.571	0.313	0.934					
ER	2.276	1.374	0.818	-0.107	-0.148	0.144	-0.347	-0.168	-0.103	0.836				
PR	2.554	1.483	0.831	-0.220	-0.263	0.093	-0.455	-0.184	-0.191	0.439	0.790			
RR	2.911	1.781	0.900	-0.303	-0.319	-0.018	-0.513	-0.264	-0.305	0.433	0.687	0.904		
SPR	3.331	1.809	0.943	-0.212	-0.255	0.009	-0.420	-0.121	-0.265	0.308	0.611	0.592	0.920	
AS	3.062	1.458	NA	0.538	0.562	0.144	0.747	0.503	0.564	-0.250	-0.422	-0.470	-0.425	NA

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Compliance (Comp); Perceived enjoyment (Pjoy); Altruistic motivations (AM); Personal fulfilment and self-actualization (PF); Environmental reasons (ER); Personal reasons (PR); Relationship reasons (RR); Security and privacy reasons (SPR); Standard deviation (SD).

Table 4 - Reliability and validity criteria (Composite reliability), correlations and AVEs (the square root shown in bold on the diagonal)

In order to ensure discriminant validity, three criteria were considered: The Fornell–Larcker criterion, the cross-loadings, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The Fornell–Larcker criterion assumes that the squared root of AVE, in bold on Table 4, should be higher than the correlation between the others constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This can be confirmed in Table 4. The second criterion used for discriminant validity was the cross-loadings. According to Götz et al. (2010) cross-loadings should be smaller than the loadings of each indicator (highlighted in bold on Table 3), which can be proved also in Table 3. Finally, Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is a very useful

approach to gain insights into discriminant validity. If the HTMT value is below 0.90, discriminant validity has been established between reflective constructs, which can be proved in Table 5 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015).

Constructs	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR
Ident										
Inter	0.785									
Comp	0.444	0.421								
Pjoy	0.632	0.721	0.158							
AM	0.411	0.432	0.288	0.473						
PF	0.729	0.711	0.410	0.606	0.338					
ER	0.108	0.156	0.258	0.368	0.161	0.115				
PR	0.234	0.288	0.220	0.488	0.192	0.196	0.598			
RR	0.332	0.382	0.122	0.577	0.303	0.347	0.541	0.878		
SPR	0.218	0.287	0.077	0.445	0.133	0.281	0.366	0.711	0.687	

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Compliance (Comp); Perceived enjoyment (Pjoy); Altruistic motivations (AM); Personal fulfilment and self-actualization (PF); Environmental reasons (ER); Personal reasons (PR); Relationship reasons (RR); Security and privacy reasons (SPR).

Table 5 – Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Concerning the formative measurement, the variable Actual travel experience Sharing (AS) is a formative construct. We evaluated the formative construct based on the multicollinearity and statistically significance and sign of weights (Hair Jr et al., 2016). In order to assess the degree of multicollinearity between the formative items the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was calculated. VIF values revealed to be lower than 5 (Lee & Xia, 2010) varying from 1.398 to 1.662 (Table 6), meaning that Actual travel experience Sharing (AS) had no problems of multicollinearity. In terms of statistically significance and sign of weights, the four items are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and with a positive sign (Table 6).

Formative construct	Items	Mean	SD	Weights	VIF
actual travel- experience sharing (AS)	AS1 - Every time I travel I share photos	3.992	2.169	0.763***	1.529
	AS2 - Every time I travel I share videos	2.304	1.568	0.169**	1.662
	AS3 - Every time I travel I share personal blogs	1.593	1.244	0.157**	1.532
	AS4 - Every time I travel I share reviews in TripAdvisor or other websites from hostels and restaurants I visit.	2.462	1.749	0.175*	1.398

Notes: Standard deviation (SD); Variance inflation factor (VIF); * $p > 0.05$; ** $p < 0.010$; *** $p < 0.001$

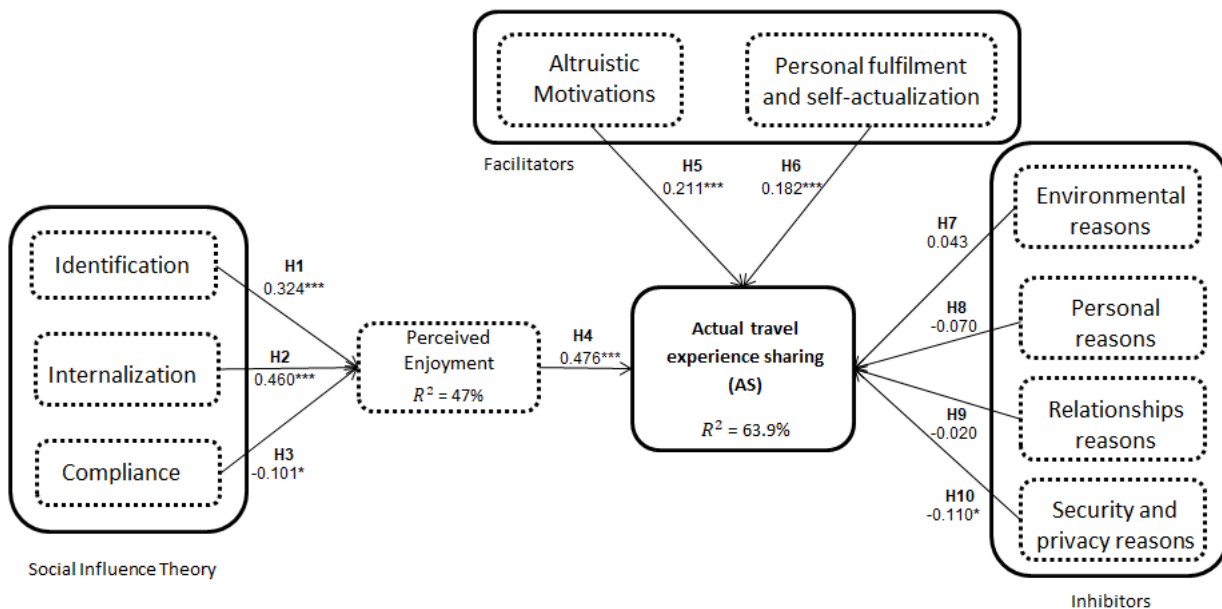
Table 6 – Formative measurement model evaluation

In conclusion, both the reflective and the formative constructs can be used to test the structural model.

5.2. STRUCTURAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES TESTING

The structural model was evaluated using the explained variation (R^2) criteria and the degree of significance of the path coefficients, assessed by bootstrapping technique (5000 iterations). Also, VIF values are lower than 5, ranging from 1.199 and 2.334, which suggest that the multicollinearity problem is discarded (Lee & Xia, 2010). The structural model estimated and its results are presented in Figure 2.

The results revealed that the proposed model explains 63.9% of the variation of actual travel experience sharing (AS). Results show that the following hypotheses were supported: identification (H1), internalization (H2), perceived enjoyment (H4), altruistic motivations (H5), personal fulfilment and self-actualization (H6). Compliance and security and privacy reasons demonstrate a negative impact towards actual travel experience sharing, which also confirms the hypotheses: H3 and H10. On the other hand, hypothesis H7 related with environmental reasons, H8 in regards to personal reasons, and H9 related to relationship reasons were not supported.



Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.010$; *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 2 – Structural model results

Internalization (Inter) was the most significant construct to explain perceived enjoyment (Pjoy) ($\hat{\beta} = 0.460$; $p < 0.001$) followed by identification ($\hat{\beta} = 0.324$; $p < 0.001$). Perceived enjoyment revealed to be the most important construct to explain the actual travel-experience sharing ($\hat{\beta} = 0.476$; $p < 0.001$).

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study assess the extent to which travellers share their travel experiences on social media, considering what motivates or inhibits them towards actual travel-experience sharing and understand the role of the users' personality characteristics in this context.

From the theoretical perspective, this research has contributed to understanding the factors impacting either positive or negatively actual travel experience sharing. Allied to this, social influence theory and its three constructs – identification, internalization and compliance, have played a critical role in this study, as well as the users' personality. This study major theoretical contribution is combining into one single model the different behaviours in social media, thereby obtaining an integrated and holistic perspective.

Table 7 summarizes the results presented with hypotheses conclusions. Internalization was the most significant construct to explain perceived enjoyment ($\beta = 0.460$; $p < 0.001$). Internalization occurs when an individual assumes the opinion of others as evidence of the truth and as part of his own values and beliefs (Malhotra & Dennis, 2005). The reason they prefer use of social media is due to the inherent values, values that people identify with. Consequently, perceived enjoyment was the most important variable to explain why travellers contribute with their travel experiences on social media, which is supported by Khan (2017) and Kang & Schuett (2013) studies. Our research reinforces one important conclusion: people found compatible values with social media and share their travel experiences on social media simply for pleasure, because they usually find it to be enjoyable and fun, more than any other reason. Sharing travel experiences to help others travellers make their plans (e.g. prevent people from using bad products or services and advise them on better options), seems to be a behaviour also common among posters, which is in accord with previous researches, such as those of Munar & Jacobsen (2014) and Munar & Ooi (2012). Recently, Sedera, et. al (2017) have studied the effect of social influence on travel experiences, affirming that, while traveling, travellers share content on social media to be socially accepted. In our study, the results of personal fulfilment and self-actualization were the least explicative motivations of actual travel-experience sharing ($\beta = 0.182$; $p < 0.001$). This indicates that, among all motivations, few were those who admitted to share information in social media just to be socially recognized due to their travel experiences and to gain personal reputation. One interesting question arises from this conclusion: are people truly honest regarding social affirmation or are they too embarrassed to admit it to our judging society?

Hypotheses	Independent variables	Dependent variables	Findings	Conclusion
H1	Identification	Perceived enjoyment	Positive and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.324; p<0.001)	Supported
H2	Internalization	Perceived enjoyment	Positive and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.460; p<0.001)	Supported
H3	Compliance	Perceived enjoyment	Negative and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ = -0.101; p<0.05)	Supported
H4	Perceived enjoyment	Actual -travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.476; p<0.001)	Supported
H5	Altruistic motivations	Actual -travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.211; p<0.001)	Supported
H6	Personal fulfilment and self-actualization	Actual -travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.182; p<0.001)	Supported
H7	Environmental reasons	Actual -travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\hat{\beta}$ =0.043; p > 0.100)	Not Supported
H8	Personal reasons	Actual -travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\hat{\beta}$ = -0.070; p > 0.100)	Not Supported
H9	Relationships reasons	Actual -travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\hat{\beta}$ = -0.020; p > 0.100)	Not Supported
H10	Security and privacy reasons	Actual -travel experience sharing	Negative and statistically significant ($\hat{\beta}$ = -0.110; p<0.05)	Supported

Table 7 – Results and hypotheses conclusions

In relation to the types of content, and according with the results of Table 6, visual content (photos) was confirmed to be the most common preference among the posters, affirming that every time they travel, they share photos but fewer were those who share videos and narrative content as personal blogs or reviews in TripAdvisor or other related websites whenever they travel. Despite the increasing number of story-telling through millions of reviews and recommendations, this conclusion, supported by Munar & Jacobsen (2014) and Bilgihan et al. (2016) findings, shows that travellers

continue to prefer a faster and impactful way to share their travel experiences, reinforcing the saying "a picture's worth a thousand words".

On the other hand, security and privacy reasons were found to be the most explanatory inhibitor when it comes to sharing information on social media, saying that one of the main reasons for not sharing their travel experiences is to preserving their privacy and safety. This conclusion coincides with Nonnecke, et al. (2001) findings, who have studied in depth the question "why do lurkers lurk?" as well as Fogel & Nehmad (2009) research about risks, trust, and privacy issues regarding social networks. Our study strengthens that information confidentiality on the internet is having an impressive negative effect on individual willingness to engage on social media. Regardless of all benefits that the Internet has brought to our lives, as time goes by, people are becoming untrusting and more and more concerned about its risks namely regarding to security and privacy, rights that people increasingly tend to preserve.

From the practical perspective, there are important implications for travel marketers and tourism agencies. Findings firstly confirmed the importance of the social media in spreading travel information, as online word-of-mouth, and its impact on users' behaviour. Moreover, only those companies that follow the growth and progress of technology are successful, not being afraid of change but having the ability to adapt to it (Y. Wang, Yu, & Fesenmaier, 2002). Nevertheless, on the other hand, security and privacy reasons regarding social media lead to the growth of the number of lurkers. Despite all of the advantages social media networks might have, the number of people who don't trust it is large enough to require some consideration. Travellers tend to trust more in assessments and opinions from family and friends rather than on tourism agencies websites, because these opinions tend to be more honest and representative of the truth. It represents a threat for tourism industry but it can also represent an opportunity to invest in other approaches. For instance, companies that provide a platform for user-generated content, as suggested by Durio (2017), are encouraging their customers to share useful and reliable insights which, therefore, is valuable for business improvements.

Lurkers are unwilling to assume the degree of exposure the social media provides, in particular the exposure to multiple threats and risks to their privacy. However, it is important that people share their point of views, feedbacks and also their criticisms regarding a product or service, so that companies could improve those products or services based on real feedback. Sun et al. (2014) have suggested four types of de-lurking, strategies to stimulate lurkers to post: external stimuli (offer tangible rewards), encouragement (improve users' self-confidence), usability improvement (make usage easier for users), and guidance for newcomers (advices from elder members) (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014). It is highly important to promote an honest and reliable interaction so that all the parties involved could take advantage.

The results encourage the tourism industry to be aware of the power of user generated content through social media platforms and its implications on their business. The challenges are enormous, thus it is fundamental that companies and all travel-related businesses know how to exploit the advantages and how to overcome the eventual disadvantages that come with social media context.

6.2 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has some limitations that are worth investigating in future researches in this context. First, the main limitations were originated from the measurement of the constructs. Despite the vast literature on sharing content on social media, there is poor empirical support to combine the different behaviours on social media – posters and lurkers – as well as the impact of users' personality in one single model.

Secondly, Millennials represent the majority of posters in social media because they come with the age of the internet, also they show the highest levels of trust in social media (Tran, Hue, Nguyen, & Phan, 2017). The research model proposed did not include age as a moderator variable. As future research we suggest a multi-group analysis that compare for example male and female or/and younger and older people.

Lastly, a subtle aspect that future researches could study more in-depth would be the honesty in social media, applied to this context. Do people say what other people want to hear, or do they say the truth, with all the inherent risks?

7. CONCLUSION

A word-of-mouth revolution has been increasing since the emerging of the Internet (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Users are no longer passive and have themselves been producing their own content and making them available online. This study reviewed users' behaviors regarding online participation, in particular on the subject of travel experiences sharing and which behaviors differ before and after the trip. This research focused on after the trip perspective, aiming to understand the drivers that lead travellers to share their travel experiences on social media, e.g. photos, videos or reviews, and understand what also may prevent or hinder online sharing. Two main conclusions were reached. First, perceived enjoyment was the most important motive to explain why travellers share their travel experiences on social media – sharing travel content is perceived to be fun and entertaining more than any other reason, e.g. altruistic motivations. Second, security and privacy reasons are at the top of lurking motives – people want to remain anonymous and preserve their privacy and safety. Moreover, it is essential to highlight the importance of companies and brands to promote platforms for user-generated content since nowadays it has been perceived as an indispensable marketing strategy tool.

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9. APPENDIX – CONSTRUCTS AND ITEMS

Construct	Items	Description	Reference
Identification	Iden1	I am very interested in what the group members think about travel-experience sharing.	Kang & Shuett (2013)
	Iden2	I feel a sense of belonging to the group when I share my travel-experiences through social media.	
	Iden3	I feel I will fit into the group when I share my travel-experiences through social media.	
Internalization	Inter1	The reason I prefer share my travel-experiences is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by the social media.	Kang & Shuett (2013)
	Inter2	The reason I prefer share my travel-experiences in social media than in other communication tools is because of its value.	
	Inter3	I want to share my travel-experiences in social media because I think is congruent with my value and beliefs.	
Compliance	Comp1	Unless I am rewarded for share my travel-experiences on social media in some way, I may spend less time to share knowledge and information.	Kang & Shuett (2013)
	Comp2	How hard I work on sharing my travel-experiences is directly related to how much I am rewarded.	
	Comp3	In order for me to get the responses I want on social media, it is necessary to express the right behaviour or attitude on social media.	
Perceived Enjoyment	Pjoy1	I usually find sharing my travel-experiences through social media to be enjoyable.	Kang & Shuett (2013)
	Pjoy2	Sharing my travel-experiences through social media in the group is pleasant.	
	Pjoy3	I have fun sharing my travel-experiences through social media in the group.	
Actual travel-experience sharing (1)	Please choose your usage frequency for each of the following: Note: Frequency ranged from 0 “never” to 7 “more than once per day of the trip”		Venkatesh et al., 2012a
	AS1	a) Every time I travel I share photos	
	AS2	b) Every time I travel I share videos	
	AS3	c) Every time I travel I share personal blogs	
	AS4	d) Every time I travel I share reviews in TripAdvisor or other websites from hostels and restaurants I visit.	
Altruistic Motivations	AM1	I want to help others	Munar & Jacobsen (2014)
	AM2	I want to prevent people from using bad products	
	AM3	I want to contribute to websites that are useful for me	
Personal fulfilment and self-actualization	PF1	I want to be recognized because of my travel-experiences	Munar & Jacobsen (2014)
	PF2	I like to transmit what I want people to think of me	
	PF3	It's important to me that people know I travel	
Environmental reasons	Please choose the extent to which of the hypotheses below inhibit online participation:		Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma,
	ER1	There is a long delay in response to postings	
	ER2	There is poor quality of messages	
	ER3	The interaction design is bad	

	ER4	There is a low response rate	(2014)
Personal reasons	PR1	I had no confidence on sharing my travel-experiences on social media.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	PR2	I'm afraid that what I post may not be important, may not be completely accurate or may not be relevant to a specific discussion.	
	PR3	I'm too shy to share travel-experiences in public.	
	PR4	I do not post because my needs, such as searching for information, could be fully satisfied by lurking (reading is enough)	
Relationship reasons	RR1	I have fear to make a commitment to a group.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	RR2	I don't want to spend additional time and resources to maintain a commitment.	
	RR3	I have low intimacy with other members	
Security and privacy reasons	SR1	My requirements of security and privacy are not satisfied by sharing my travel-experiences.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	SR2	I'm afraid that share my travel-experiences will place me in danger or reveal my personal information.	
	SR3	One of the main reasons for not sharing my travel-experiences is to preserving privacy and safety	